

Today, I would like to tell you a story about a girl named Jen. Jen's life was turned completely upside down and ruined a few years ago when a supposed friend decided to have her charged with 3rd degree criminal sexual conduct.

Before the charges were placed upon her, Jen was a very outstanding and well respected citizen in her community. In every sense of the word, she was an overachiever. She ran a women's fitness center for over 6 years, helped to organize many charity groups and fundraisers for important groups such as breast cancer awareness, cystic fibrosis, and the juvenile diabetes walk/run marathons. She helped over 3000 women reach weight loss goals by encouragement, support, and education. She is also a young mother of two beautiful children, ages 9 and 12. Before the charges, Jen never missed her children's school functions, field trips, or holiday parties. She had every woman's dream of the perfect life. However, what she didn't know was how her giving nature would affect her and her family, until she came into contact with a very vindictive family. Being the outgoing and giving person she was Jen could never have imagined people like this existed until the events leading to her conviction.

She met a woman in desperate need of help as a result of a highly dysfunctional family. This woman was a victim of domestic violence committed by her husband, who himself abused illegal drugs and was a raging alcoholic. This woman was very co-dependent and could not break free of the relationship. During one of his drinking rages, he had beaten one of the children in the home. Even after this horrible event, this woman still stood by her husband. Jen's heart ached for this family. The woman never had, nor could ever keep friends because she was at the will of her husband and his horrendous behavior. Jen reached out to her with the reassurance that no matter what – she was going to be her friend. She began to collect money from the community for her new friend's family, threw her children birthday parties, and invited her family to her own family holiday parties. Moreover, Jen supplied Christmas for them as well. The father, due to his drug and alcohol abuse, could not hold down a job. The mother and father encouraged their oldest son to quit school and support the family. At this point, Jen was frustrated with the boy's mother and took it upon herself to help him graduate. She talked to the boy's mother, the school counselor, and they finally enrolled him into an alternative high school. Jen spent a lot of time with this 16 year old and her mothering instincts began to show him the love he had never received from his parents. Unfortunately, this 16 year old started to develop an obsession with Jen. Even with the uncomfortable obsession he was building toward Jen, the mother continued to push him on

her. At this point, Jen's heart took over. Please know that she has never denied having a relationship with him, which was consensual and the boy admitted to this fact. During this time, Jen also talked the Mother into separating from her abusive husband and the man began to see Jen as a threat. Sadly, the boy never knew about what a healthy relationship entails only abusive behavior. The boy was very possessive of Jen her if she ever went away he would kill himself, threaten to quit school, and continue to abuse dangerous drugs with his father. These statements scared Jen when all she wanted was the best for the boy. Uncomfortable emotions between this boy and his mother were building toward Jen and she was conflicted. Unfortunately, Jen did not have the resources or knowledge to step away from the situation. Additionally, the boy's mother continued to pressure Jen not to leave him. The mother freely admitted she was having difficulties with her attempts to leave the abusive marriage and was unable to give the boy the attention he needed.

In many ways, Jen tried to leave the entire situation but upon any attempt, the threats would unleash from the boy. Even going to the extreme where he jumped on the hood of Jen's car to stop her from leaving him. The mother of the boy was well aware of his obsession and these events, but knew if Jen left the situation, her son's life would be devastated.

Jen's husband was deeply concerned and made the decision to reveal what he knew to the abusive father of the boy, threatening him with social services and having the children removed from the home. The abusive husband was enraged began to seek revenge toward Jen resulting in continuous threats to Jen. However, the threats were now from the abusive father and his co-dependent wife. Jen received email and text messages of their plan to convict her of CSC charges and ruin her reputation forever! The police report they filed was false and the abusive father had threatened the boy to lie about his age at the time of his relationship with Jen.

Jen went from being a well respected woman in her community to an instant "sex offender". Nobody cared about the overwhelming evidence against this family, or the threatening text and email messages, which Jen still has to this day. Jen has dealt with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, and has developed Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. She is highly afraid to leave her home and constantly fears for her safety and well being. Worse than anything, her children's lives have been ruined. Jen can no longer attend school events, sporting events, and go to the park with her children. The ridicule from

other peers in school was and continues to be horrifying. Sadly, they continually ask Jen why she isn't active in their lives like she once was, not fully understanding the gravity of the situation.

The threats to Jen's person and family are so dire, that during Jen's six month jail sentence, she gained a stalker through a prison in Michigan. He is still presently sending her love mail and has told her when he is released from prison, they will be together. This terrifying situation is only due to Jen's profile and picture on the sex offender website and in local newspapers. Her marriage has suffered to the point of almost divorcing. However, she the overwhelming evidence helped to prove her innocence to her husband. With the firm relationship formed with God, and the love and unwavering support of her husband, they were able to save their marriage. Today, it is stronger than it has ever been but sadly she is unable to be the mom she was and so desperately wants to be again.

I'm sorry; I forgot to introduce myself in the beginning of this speech. My name is Jen and this is my story. I want you to know I thank God every day for my husband and children because without them, I would not be where I am today! I am only human. I made the mistake of trusting the wrong people. Because of their vindictive natures, my life will never be the same. I have put forth much effort to turn my life around and recently finished cosmetology school. This week I was denied my license because I am a registrant. This seems cruel to me when I realize the state funded my education for these past 2 years in the amount of \$10,000. I attend church regularly and have a very close relationship with God and use my faith in Him to endure these hardships. However, I always have this gray cloud. I am not a sick or perverse person, nor did I rape a child. I did not force sex on someone, nor am I threat to anyone. Yet, I still remain on the sex offender registry. I am 33 years old and if I remain on the sex offender list, my life will be over. I will not be able to get a job or see my kids graduate from school. I ask you: "Have you ever made a mistake and were you forgiven?" All I want is to be forgiven for my actions, and for my life to be given back to me and my family, and with God's wisdom, not have my life become any worse than it is currently.